

SIX DARŚANAS AND CHRISTIANITY

Dr. J. D. Baskara Doss



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**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF LEADERSHIP TRAINING
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Foreword

It was God given opportunity for me to witness Dr. J. D. Baskara Doss presenting his paper on "Six Darshanas and Christiniaty" at the first International Conference on the History of Early Christianity in India held in 2005 at Concordia College, Bronx, New York. As the trustees of NILT, we felt that this paper should be published by our organisation as the sole aim of NILT is to propagate the Word of God in our mother land on the line of contextualized evangelism. India is a land spirituality where the people need to have more access to learn Indian philosophy and Indian Religion in the proper understanding. I congratulate Dr. J. D. Baskara Doss for his zeal of evangelism that he had given us the opportunity to publish his books by NILT.

I Thank God for the trustees of NILT for their unquenchable thirst for implementing indegenous methods of evangelism, which is the need of the hour in India so as to lead our people towards 'True Light'. I thank Dr. John Samuel, Pastor Oswin Michael and Bro. N. John Jeyanandam, P. Bose Ponraj (Moriah Ministries) for their support and involvement.

G. J. Pandithurai

Founder Trustee & President

NILT

Preface

The 'Jungle Texts' or the 'Forest Treatises' are the Upanishads which had played a pivotal role in the Indian thought and ultimately the spiritual investigation was systemetised during the period of Darshanas. The Upanishads had given birth to Vedantic ideologies which the scholars term it as the 'Culmination of Indian thought'.

I am not a scholar of Indian philosophy but an elementary level student who has the quest for learning and investigating the truth.

After permutation and combination they should have arrived at number six about the Darshana texts. Madhva had enumerated sixteen Darshanas in his 'Sarva Darshana Sangraha'. It is not a mystery how Purva Mimamsa of Jai mini was included in the above realm of Darshanas. We cannot ignore that a conspiracy must have been hatched to thwart the burning spirit of Dravidian spirituality.

This book is a small step, though not a great compendium, towards an ongoing effort of finding truth and reality. This piece of work is a part of my doctoral research. This also was presented as a research paper in Bronx, New York in 2005 at the First International Conference on the Early History of Christianity in India. I thank Dr. John Samuel, the founder president of ICSC I for having given us his consent to publish this book. The Trustees Messrs A. J. Rajasekaran, R. Soundar Rajan, Sharon Devaprasannam of NILT under the leadership of G. J. Pandithurai are instrumental in bringing this work published. As a trustee of this organisation I

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Introduction

According to S. Radhakrishnan, Darśana is a spiritual perception. Usually Darśanas are classified as Orthodox and Hetrodox. Vedic Darśanas are known as Orthodox and non-Vedic Darśanas are termed as hetrodox. In fact Charvaka, Buddhism and Jainism are the hetrodox systems which were prevalent before Vedicism, i.e., before Christ. The hetrodox systems mentioned above tried to investigate about spirit (uyir), its bond with the previous birth and the future birth and consequently Jainism and Buddhism propounded a theory of cycle of birth or rebirth. But the later systems viz. Samkhya, Yōga, Nyāya, Vaisesika and Brahma Sūtras, that were founded in the Christ era, should be rightly called as Vedantic Darśanas as they were developed not from the Vedas but from the Upaniṣads basically deal with the nature of soul and its relationship with God and the world.

Since these Vedāntic Darśanas were evolved and developed only during the period of Christ era, the doctrinal aspects of

Christianity, which is a religion founded in Asia, also can be taken into account for our study because history reveals that the gospel message of Christ was already sown in the Indian soil along with the advent of St. Thomas, an apostle of Jesus Christ since 52 A.D. The impact of Christian doctrines on Vedānta appears to be great and this paper shall try to deal with those aspects which are very fundamental in nature.

Darsanam-etymological Meaning

Darśanam is a Sanskrit term which means vision. It is derived from the root 'drs' > dr̥ṣṭi from which 'darśana' is formed. 'Dr̥ṣ' means to see. In ordinary sense, it means the external vision whereas in philosophy it is used in the sense of philosophic knowledge. In the words of S. Radhakrishnan,

"A system of thought is called 'darśana' (Vaisesika sūtra ix.2.13) from the root dr̥ṣ, to see. It is a vision of truth. The Upaniṣads which related these visions or experiences use the language of meditation, *samādhībhāṣa*. It is difficult to express the truths of experience through logical proposition, for the most appropriate response to the spiritual experience is silence or poetry."¹

Encyclopaedia of Vedānta gives the meaning for Darsanam as, 'observing, knowing, understanding'.²

The word 'darśana' has its earliest use in Vaisesika sūtras of Kaṇāda (ix.2.13). S.N. Gupta points out that 'Haribadra (fifth century AD.) uses the word Darśana in the sense of system of philosophy (sarvadarśana vācyorthah — saddarśanasamuccaya).³

Nirmal Selvamani explains it in terms of ‘anvikshi’.

“The meaning of the term is Kāṭci. It is the combination of ‘anv’ and ‘aksha’. The vision that we receive through our eyes is ‘anv’. The Sanskrit term ‘aksha’ is closely related to the Tamil word ‘akku’. Akku means to shrink”.⁴

From this we understand that the word ‘Anvikshiki’ was used to mean darśana.

In his book ‘Indian Philosophy’ S. Radhakrishnan writes: ‘A ‘Darśana’ is a spiritual perception, a whole view revealed to the soul sense’.⁵ The above definitions reveal that Darśana is a study pertaining to the soul and the aspects associated with the soul. It is a study which covers a very vast area of knowledge of philosophy and it is a study investigating into the qualities of Brahman and His relationship with the world of human beings.

Tamiḷk kāṭci

The word ‘Kāṭci’ in Tamil may be used as an equivalent term for Darśana. The usage of the word ‘Kāṭci’ in ancient Tamil literature like Tokāppiyam, Caṅkam poetry ethical literature etc. are plenty and the word is so pregnant with meaning. We may cite a few examples here.

‘ceyir tīr kāṭci karpu’⁶

‘Irul tīr kāṭci’⁷

‘Ācaru kāṭci aiyar’⁸

‘Tiravōr kāṭci’¹⁰

The above line were explained with philosophical touch by the commentators. A scholar has explained the meaning of the Tamil word kāṭci in the following way: ‘Kāṭci (Wisdom) in a wider sense

combining knowledge, emotion and soul'.¹¹ He opines that 'kāṭci' may be an appropriate term which could bring out the meaning of philosophy. The connotation of kāṭci goes beyond the ordinary meaning of vision and it refers to the realization of wisdom etc. which surpasses 'karma-mārga' prescribed by the Vedic thought.

Classification of Six Darśanas

Darśana as a point of view in Indian philosophy, refers to the different system, each with its own way of looking at things. 'The traditional account is that there are six such darśanas, all of them orthodox: Samkhya, Yoga, Nyāya, Vaisesika Mimamsa and Vedānta'.¹² But in the history of Indian philosophy other darśanas are also mentioned such as hetrodox ones of Buddhism, Jainism and the materialistic Cārvākas. The division mediated principally by the 14th century writer and the exponent of the Dvaita school, Madhva in his Sarva-darśana sangraha imposes no real classification on the varieties of philosophic schools of India.

The systems of Indian philosophy are traditionally classified in the following manner:

Traditional Classification of Indian Darśanas

Avaitika Philosophy(Un-orthodox)	Vaitika Philosophy(Orthodox)
1. Cārvāka 2. Buddhism 3. Jainism	1. Samkhya 2. Yoga 3. Nyāya 4. Vaisesika 5. Purva Mīmāṃsa 6. Uttara Mīmāṃsa

Table 1

The above classification is untenable as far as the systems mentioned under Vaitika philosophy is concerned. We know that Cārvāka, Buddhism and Jainism are Avaitika darśanas.

But the systems that have been tabulated on the right-hand side need to be reviewed for the simple reason that except Mīmāṃsa Sūtras of Jaimini, the rest of the five systems are based on the Upaniṣads and not on the Aryan Vedas. 'Upaniṣads are regarded as the source of all philosophy that arose in the world of Hindu thought'.¹³ Moreover it is pointed out by great scholars that Upaniṣadic thought were the development which grew against the Vedic thought.

'The Oxford Companion to Philosophy' discloses: 'Systematic philosophies grew up gradually through attempts to understand, rationalize and react against the Vedic tenets'.¹⁴ The Upaniṣads very remarkably deviate from the Vedic thought and the Upaniṣads are the products of the Dravidians. But it has been conveniently swallowed up by the Aryan and pro-Aryan authors saying that the Upaniṣads are part of the Vedic literature viz. 1. Samhitas 2. Brahmanas 3. Araṇyakas and 4. Upaniṣads. The Upaniṣads cannot be placed along with the Vedic literature. In this regard S.N. Gupta writes:

"Whatever might be said about these literary classifications the ancient philosophers of India looked upon the Upaniṣads as being of an entirely different type from the rest of the Vedic literature as dictating the path of knowledge (jñāna-mārga) which forms the content of the later".¹⁵

The Mīmāṃsa Sūtras alone was composed by Jaimini to uphold the Vedic tradition. A glance at the following table shall show a bird's eye view of the systems of philosophy.

Systems of Philosophy

System of Philosophy	Author	Race	Classified Group
Sāmkhya	Kapila	Dravidian	Non-Vedic
Yōga	Patanjali	Dravidian	Non-Vedic
Nyāya	Gautama	Dravidian	Non-Vedic
Vaisesika	Gaṇāta	Dravidian	Non-Vedic
Brahma Sūtras	Vyāsa	Dravidian	Non-Vedic
Mīmāmsa Sūtras	Jaimin	Aryan	Vedic

Table 2.

Cārvāka, Buddhism and Jainism are the systems of thought that were prevalent during pre-Christ era but the six systems are classified as darśanas only in the post-Christ era and among these Mīmāmsa Sūtras have developed from Aryan thought. Therefore, the rest of the systems mentioned above are the Dravidian darśanas or Dravidian Philosophy.

1

Upaniṣads

The term Upaniṣad explains the method with which the natives of India received their learnings from their preceptors mainly in the forests. Arthur Berriedale Keith states:

“The word is derived obviously from the prefixes ‘Upa-ni and sad’, and the only natural meaning is a session, a sitting down near a person, who naturally is assumed to be a teacher”.¹⁷

These teachings are described by the scholars as ‘secret sessions’, and the Upaniṣads are termed as the ‘jungle texts’. The scholars also assert that the Upaniṣads are the intellectual findings of the native Dravidians. Arthur Berriedale states:

“It has frequently been suggested that the philosophy of the Upaniṣad is essentially Dravidian rather than Aryan, and plausible grounds can be adduced in this sense. Thus we may fairly certain that, as time went on, Dravidian blood came more and more to prevail over Aryan....”¹⁸

The Upaniṣads delineate from Vedic duties and from Vedic literature. The Aryan Vedas prescribe ‘karma mārga’ whereas the Upaniṣads emphasize ‘jñāna mārga’. Those who perform Vedic

duties belong to a stage inferior to those who no longer care for the fruits of Vedic duties but are eager for final emancipation. S.N. Gupta states, 'The passage of the Indian mind from the Brāhmanic to the Upaniṣad thought is probably the most remarkable event in the history of philosophic thought'.²⁰

In the words of C. Kunhan Raja, 'The philosophical development at a later stage cannot be traced to the Vedic thoughts'.²¹ Suffice to say that the philosophic thoughts of the Upaniṣads are not the products of the Aryan Vedas. According to the accounts given by different authors that the Brahmins had learnt the 'jñāna mārga' from the warrior class and hence Upaniṣads are otherwise known as Vedānta.

Vedānta not the end portion of Vedas

As has been discussed so far, Vedānta cannot be held is the end portion of the Vedas. It means that Vedānta is the one which puts and end to the Vedas. Vedānta literally meant the termination of Vedic study. Authors like Paul Deussen have pointed out that Vedas are like the Old Testament practice of offering sacrifice and Vedānta is like that of the New Testament doctrine which has fulfilled the sacrifice and has created a new path to salvation and heaven. Thus it should be noted that Vedānta has set aside the Vedic ideas and had initiated a new approach to investigate about the nature of God, who claims himself to be the sacrifice and therefore it may be called as the end of the sacrifice and end of the Veda.

Vedāntic philosophy not Vedic

The Upaniṣads are the source materials for the systems of Dravidian (Indian) Philosophy. There is a tradition which arranges the six darśanas into three twin groups, viz.

1. Sāmkhya – Yōga
2. Nyāya – Vaisesika
3. Pūrva Mīmāmsa – Uttara Mīmāmsa.

Pūrva Mīmāmsa attributes its authority to the Aryan Vedas. It deals with an investigation whether the interpretation what we give for the rules of the Vedas are correct or not. The major portion of the Mīmāmsa Sūtras give elaborate explanations for the sacrificial rituals and it deals with all kinds of avenues to the supremacy of the Brāhmins. It is 'an odd man out' in the six systems. Therefore it would be correct to call the Mīmāmsa Sūtras of Jaimini as Vedic darśana or system. The rest five that attribute their authority to the Upaniṣads should be rightly termed as Vedāntic darśanas. The following table elucidates this:

Vedāntic and Vedic darśanas

Vedāntic Systems	Vedic System
1. Sāmkhya 2. Yōga 3. Nyāya 4. Vaisesika 5. Brahma Sūtras (Uttara Mīmāmsa)	Mīmāmsa Sūtras (Pūrva Mīmāmsa)

Table 3.

So the five systems viz. Sāmkhya, Yōga, Nyāya, Vaiseika and Uttara Mīmāmsa are the core systems of Dravidian philosophy. It is for the scholars to analyse how and when the usage 'six darśanas' and 'Vedic darśanas' came into being. Therefore, it goes without saying that Indian philosophy is Dravidian philosophy but the

commentators like Sankara and other brāhmanic 'bhāsyakaras' only could have instituted a classification like Vedic systems etc.

Vedānta is fulfilment of sacrifice

Sacrificial worship was universal. Animal sacrifice was prevalent throughout the world in the pre Christ era and afterwards. The Old Testament prescribes different types of sacrifices as a symbol of thanksgiving and as a mark of expiation of sin. But from the period of Jesus Christ's sacrifice all the major religions of the world have stopped the bloody sacrifices. It was Christianity which had done away with the practice of sacrifice and therefore this religion has to be called as a religion of the fulfilment of sacrifice. The same doctrine in the philosophy is called as Vedānta.

The word Vedānta first occurs in Svetasvatara Upaniṣad.²² Brahma Sūtras also employs this word in the third chapter.²³

The religion of Vyāsa is Vedānta. He is the compiler of the Vedas. He compiled the nomadic songs and the songs sung during the social gatherings of the Aryans and he only had christened the poems as Vedas. Vyāsa belongs to the school of Vedānta yet he compiled the sacrificial songs because he wanted to introduce a new doctrine of the fulfillment of sacrifice. The Vedic sacrificial songs are instrumental to show that such practice of worship becomes obsolete because of the sacrifice of Prajapati. The Sanskrit name Prajapati is an equivalent of Christ, meaning king. The sacrifice of Prajapati cannot hold good when the doctrine of avatar is not introduced. The main purpose of avatar is to redeem the whole world through his sacrifice. Based on this theme a new doctrine of surrender and 'prapatti' were emerged since it is the only way for 'mukti' or mōksha.

Jungle-teachings and Dravidian Philosophy

The Indian forests have played an immense role in the development and formation of the Dravidian (Indian) philosophy. We already have noted down that the Upaniṣads are known as the 'jungle texts'. The Indian forests were the abode of the Dravidian 'rīṣis' and seers and they were also the birth place of the philosophical tenets. C. Kunhan Raja states that,

"The forests which had played an important role towards the development of Indian thought have not been properly recognized. The hermitages of the Rīṣis were the birth places of the development of the Indian system of thought. But this development was from the period of the Upaniṣads and the forests had no role to play during the early Vedic period."²⁴

A few scholars mention that the literature of Āraṇyakas had played a role in the development of the Upaniṣads. This claim has been refuted by scholars like S.N. Gupta and others. Samhitas, Brāhmanas and Āraṇyakas are ritualistic and the Upaniṣads profess a new thematic doctrine of 'jñāna kāṇḍa' and moreover the Vedic Brahmins never had retired to the forests. C. Kunhan Raja states, that 'the rīṣis of the Ṛg Veda were living in the villages and towns. The Vedic people never retired to the forests to ponder over their thoughts. The forests had played no role in the civilization of the brāhmaṇas'.²⁵

In the strict sense the Upaniṣads are not the philosophical treatises but rather collections of texts compiled by different authors, mostly anonymous ones, at different times and on different subjects. Each text is rather very short expositions of philosophical musings of some author speaking on behalf of a legendary or semi-legendary wise man. Therefore the texts of the Upaniṣads contain diverging

interpretations of worldview problems of tendencies pertaining to materialistic, idealistic, theological principles etc. Therefore, it became necessary to systematize the scattered and jumplied thematic ideologies of the Upaniṣads. In the process of the systematization of philosophy, they also evinced keen interest in the development of the pramāṇas. This seems to have given rise to the different systems of philosophy and in this process each system had been composed in the aphorism texts.

Aphorism texts

The systematic treatises were written in short aphorisms called sūtras. They were intended as memory-aids when long discussions on any topic was carried out by the student with his teacher.

Nanṇūl defines what sūtra means in the following way:

“Cilvakai eḷuttīl palvakai poruḷaic Cevvaṇ āṭiyil ceṛittinītu viḷakkit
Tiṭpa nuṭpam cirantaṇa cūtiram”²⁶

A sūtra should be concise, be pregnant with meaning like the image in the mirror so condensed whatever may be the size of the object, like the image in the mirror the words should be very few and precise regarding the essence of a topic.

Since the sūtras were precise more commentaries appeared with the view to explain the meaning of the aphorism texts. It is observed that ‘the thought of these Sūtras was much developed by later thinkers and even modified by them, though all of them disclaimed any originality in it, declaring that they were merely interpreting the sūtras. This was specially the case with respect to the philosophical Sūtras’.²⁷ The attempt to write commentaries gave rise to Vūttis, Kārikās and bhāsyas. In the above processes, these texts had suffered interpolations, mutilations, twisted commentaries etc. and it has to be analysed separately.

2

Exponents of the Six Systems

Padma Purana enumerates the founders of the systems of philosophy. Maṇimekalai also mentions about six systems:- Lōkāyata — Prakaspati; Buddhism — Buddha; Samkhya — Kapila; Nyāya - Ashapāda; Vaishesika - Gaṇāda; and Mīmāṃsa — Jaimini.²⁸ Lōkāyata and Buddhism are not included in the six systems and Yoga and Brahma Sūtras are somehow omitted in Maṇimekalai. Sivajñāna Siddhiyār (1253 A.D.) enumerates fourteen systems in Parapakkam. They are: Lōkāyata, Saurantika, Yogasara system, Mādyamika system, Vaibāsika, Nikaṇṭavātha, Ācīvaka, Bhattacharya (mīmāṃsa), Prabhakara (mīmāṃsa), Suddha Brahmvāta, Māyavāda, Pārṅkariyam (Pariṇāma Māya Vādam), Nirīswara Samkhya and Pāncarātra. 'From Brahmajāla-Sūtras we learn that in his time there were as many as sixty two different schools of philosophy in India'.²⁹ But the exponents of Vedāntic and Vedic systems (Six systems) are given hereunder.

Sāmkhya	-	Kapila
Yōga	-	Patanchali
Nyāya	-	Goutama
Vaishesika	-	Kaṇāda

Brahma Sūtras	-	Vyāsa (Bādarāyaṇa)
Mīmāṃsa	-	Jaimini.

Kapila

Kapila is considered as a mythical person by Macdonell.³⁰ However he is also considered as a Tamil scholar who founded Sāṃkhya and one scholar opines that Kapila of Tamil Sangam Age and Kapila of Sāṃkhya are one and the same.³¹ However it has to be re-examined.

Patanchali

Patanchali is the exponent of Yōga system. According to G. Devaneyan Patanchali is from the South (Tamil Nadu).³² His name is mentioned in Vyāsa Bhāṣya III.4.4 as 'iti Patanchali'. He might be a different person from Patamchali of Yōga.³³ The Sanskrit grammarian with the same name Patanchali also is mentioned. These have to be verified by analysis.

Gautama

The exponent of Nyāya Sūtras is known by another name Akshapada. Aksha-means the eye, and pada means the leg.

Kaṇāda

Kaṇāda is the exponent of Vaisesika which expounds the atomic system of philosophy. Kaṇāda means atom-eater. His name occurs in the Harivamsa. He is also known by another name Uluka. The Vāyu Purāṇa mentions that he hails from a place called Prapasa near Dwaraka.³⁴

Jaimini

Jaimini is the exponent of Pūrva Mīmāṃsa. V. Brodov writes that, 'a Brahman named Jaimini expounded the greatest atheistic

teaching'.³⁵ Mohanlal Sandal calls him as a mythical saint and nothing more about him is known.³⁶ It is normally held that Bādarāyaṇa and Jaimini are contemporaries. The name Jaimini occurs in Brahma Sūtras as many times as eleven. Fredrick L. Kumar writes that, The Mīmāṃsa Sūtras mentions the name and also mentions him as an opponent of this philosophy. This implies that there were other older Mīmāṃsakas having the same name Jaimini but holding different views with regard to rituals and interpretations'.³⁷

Vyāsa

The name Vyāsa plays a very vital role in the Indian history of religion and philosophy. Vyāsa means the compiler. Monier Monier Williams explains that,

“He is called Vyāsa, but this is, of course, a mere epithet derived from the Sanskrit verb Vy-as, meaning, ‘to dispose in regular sequence’, and therefore would be equally applicable to any compiler.”³⁸

The name Vyāsa occurs in many generations – the compiler of Vedas, the compiler of Upaniṣads, composer of Brahma Sūtras, Bhagavad Gita, Mahabharata, the great Puranas, Upa Puranas etc. These works could not have been accomplished by a single person. Each of these works singly and collectively represent and expound the Vedāntic ideologies under the name Vyāsa and hence Vyāsa should represent a school of thought and not an individual.³⁹ Vyāsa is also known by another name Bādarāyaṇa because his hermitage was in Badari.⁴⁰ The Vyāsa was Kṛṣṇa Dwaipayana – ‘kṛṣṇa’ because he was dark-complexioned, ‘Dwaipayana’ because he was born on an island in the Yamuna. He was called ‘Veda Vyāsa’ for it was he who compiled and classified the Vedic songs. Vyāsa is a title and the Puranic stories may refer to the first Vyāsa who had founded the school.

3

Principal features of Darśanas

Monier Monier Williams⁴¹ has analysed the principal features of the Indian Darśanas which may be enumerated in the following lines so as to have an overview about the features. It has to be borne in our minds that the analysis of Monier Monier Williams is not final.

1. Darśanas look upon soul as of two kinds:

- (a) the supreme spirit or self (called variously Ātman, Paramātman, Brahman, Purusha & C).
- (b) the personal individual spirit of living beings (jīvātman).

2. It asserts the eternity of the visible universe or of the substance out of which the universe has been evolved; in other words, of its substantial or material cause.

3. The spirit, though itself sheer thought and knowledge, can only exercise thought, consciousness, sensation and cognition and indeed can only act and will when connected with external and objective objects of sensation invested with some bodily form and joined to mind (manas), which last (viz. mind) is an internal organ of senses (antaḥ - karna) a sort of inlet of thought to the spirit – belonging only to

the body, only existing with it and quite as distinct from the spirit as any other external organs of the body. The Supreme Spirit has thus connected itself in the successive ages with objects and forms, becoming manifest either as Brahma the Creator or in the form of other gods, as Vishnu and Siva, or again in the form of man.

4. The union of spirit with the body is productive of bondage and in the case of human spirits, of misery, for when once so united the spirits begins to apprehend objects through the senses, receive therefrom painful and pleasurable impressions.
5. In order to accomplish the entire working out of these consequences or 'ripening of acts, as they are called (Karma-Vipākāh), it is not enough that the personal spirit goes to heaven or hell.
6. The transmigration of the spirit through a constant succession of bodies is to be regarded as the root of all evil. Moreover, by it all the misery inequality of fortune, and diversity of character in the world is to be explained.
7. From the consideration of Hindu rationalism it is plain that great aim of philosophy is to teach a man to abstain from every kind of action; from liking or disliking, from loving or hating, and even from being indifferent to anything.

The tenets and beliefs of Buddhism and Jainism had contributed the theory of karma and cycle of birth in the darśanas. 'The idea of sukla and kṛṣṇa karmas of the Yōga system was probably suggested by the Jaina view'.⁴² Buddhism suggested a pessimistic attitude towards world. This is seen in Sāmkhya and Yōga. S.N. Gupta states,

“Though the belief that the world is full of sorrow has not been equally prominently emphasized in all systems, yet it may be considered as being shared by all of them. It finds its strongest utterance in Sāmkhya, Yōga and Buddhism”.⁴³

Indian systems are unanimous with regard to the means to be employed for the purpose of attaining a very high degree of moral greatness he had to strengthen and prepare his mind for further purifying and steadying it for the attainment of his ideal.

Though there are differences among these systems, yet their goal of life, their attitude towards the world and the means for attainment of the goal (Sādhana) being fundamentally the same.⁴⁴

It may be noted here that the Upaniṣads had asserted that the ‘ātman’ is indestructible and eternal (Taittiriya Upaniṣad, II.5, Brhadāraṇya Upaniṣad IV.5.14). The Brahma Sūtras undertakes an indepth analysis about ātman in the spiritual lines. S. Radhakrishnan states that Indian philosophy is spiritual. He says:

“Philosophy in India is essentially spiritual. It is intense spirituality of India, and not any great political structure or social organization that it has developed, that has enabled it to resist the ravage of time and accidents of history”.⁴⁵

He further states that ‘philosophy is no racial idiosyncrasy of India, but a human interest’.⁴⁶ The whole philosophy tends towards a classless society and undermining of class hatreds and antipathies.

Inclination towards theistic approach

Another important aspect of the Darśanas is that in the course of their developments they incline to grow from atheistic tendency towards theistic approach. Buddhism and Jainism are not exceptions

to this. Mahayana Buddhism developed in the Christ era which had embraced a new theistic line of worshipping Buddha as God. The same way Svetambara Jainism had developed during the era of Christ.

The same tendency is noticed in the Indian systems of philosophy. The atheistic Sāmkhya was termed as Nirīswara Sāmkhya and in course of time it was known as Seswara Sāmkhya when they had accepted God. The Yōga system acknowledges a god (Īśwara) as distinct from Ātman and lays much importance on certain mystical practices (commonly known as Yōga practices) for the achievement of liberation. S.N. Gupta states that 'Vijñāna Bhikṣu, the commentator of the Sāmkhya Sūtra, was more inclined to Theistic Sāmkhya or Yōga than to atheistic Sāmkhya.'⁴⁷

It is believed that the early version of the Nyāya text was not theistic. However, a theory of divine causality is referred to in the Nyāya sūtras. S. Radhakrishnan also points out that the fundamental text books of the two schools, the Vaisesika and Nyāya, originally did not accept the existence of God, it was not till a subsequent period that the two systems changed to theism. Once the Naiyayikas began to be theistic, they referred to supreme soul in connection with their discussion of Atman. Souls are classified into two kinds, supreme and human. God is the supreme soul. He is one and omniscient; the human souls are many and different. God is considered a special soul, possessing the attributes of omnipotence and omniscience by which he regulates the universe. The theory of God in Nyāya is connected with liberation. God helps in the creation of the universe from eternal atoms, space, time, ether, mind and souls. He is not only the freedom, but also the infinite knowledge.

The study of Uttara Mīmāṃsa is very significant because it deals with the nature of God (Brahman), the nature of individual

soul, the relationship between individual soul and the Universal Soul (God), the bondage of soul, its release, the concept of heaven and hell etc. Therefore Vedānta Sūtras is also known as Mōksha Sāstra and it is completely theistic.

4

Period of Six Darśanas

Though numerous Darśanas are enumerated in Indian philosophy, we have no definite clue to know when and how the Darśanas were classified as six in number. Some of the writers very casually fix the date of the above Darśanas as though they had been composed before Christ era. They hardly give solid evidences to show that they belong to a period before Christ. We lack historic evidences about the authors of the above Darśanas and moreover the authors usually indicate that the above exponents are mythical figures. If this is held as true then the very act of assigning the period for the six systems also will not be scientific.

Another view has been expressed in the introduction to Brahma Sūtras (Sankara) regarding the foundation of six systems. It says:

“The destructive criticism of everything in the old system by the Cārvākas and others set the orthodox section to organize their belief on a more rationalistic basis and render it immune against all such criticism. This led to the foundation of six systems of orthodox Hindu philosophy”.⁴⁸

The only system which accepted the authority of the Vedas is Mīmāṃsa Sūtras and hence the rest five are Vedāntic systems.

Klaus K. Klostermeier has indicated that the term 'darśana' came into usage only in the 2nd c.A.D. He says: 'The term darśana has been common in India since second century. Before that, the term 'anviksiki' later restricted to "logic" seems to have served'.⁴⁹

According to S. Radhakrishnan, the period of Sūtra literature in Sanskrit belongs to 2nd c.A.D.⁵⁰ The six systems are in the form of sūtra literature. Therefore, the period of the Darśanas cannot be placed before 2nd c.A.D. According to S.N. Dasgupta the developmental period of Indian philosophy started in 500 B.C. (Buddha's period) and ended in the middle of 7th c.A.D.⁵¹ 'Professor Woods had adduced to assign the date of the Yōga Sūtra between 300 A.D. and 500 A.D. are not at all conclusive'.⁵² But the Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies suggests that there is no evidence to show that Yōga system was prevalent during 6th c.A.D. The Yōga Sūtras might have been composed during the period of Sāmkhya Kārika of Īsvara Kṛṣṇa'.⁵³

Some scholars opine that the Nyāya Sūtras should have been composed in a period later than Brahma Sūtras. He says:

"But there are other reasons which lead me to think that atleast some of the present sūtras were written sometime in the second century A.D. Bodas point out that Bādarāyaṇa's sūtras make allusions to the Vaisesika doctrines and not to Nyāya. On this ground he thinks that Vaisesika Sūtras whereas Nyāya sūtras were written later".⁵⁴

It is held by the scholars that the Nyāya Sūtras underwent drastic changes, alterations etc. and its period may be put at a later date. Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya in his introduction to Nyāya Sūtra asserts that,

“However, what is certain from the internal evidences of the Nyāya-Sūtras is that the text is subject to a series of major and minor alterations for centuries, until the idea occurs to somebody in the ninth century A.D. to settle its exact reading”.⁵⁵

Regarding the period of Brahma Sūtras, Gregory J. Darling states that it was not available with its fully fledged form until 400-500 A.D. He says that ‘it represents about 700 years of thought, and that it did not take final form until around 400-500 A.D.’.⁵⁶

It is held that the period of Brahma Sūtras is earlier than Bhagavad Gīta. Bhagavad Gīta refers Brahma Sūtras as ‘Brahma Sūtra pataihī’ (Gīta 13:4) Max Muller also asserts that Bādarāyaṇa’s work is earlier than Gīta.⁵⁷ The above analysis lead us to conclude that the six darśanas were composed, modified or altered and compiled between 2nd and 8th c.A.D. and none of the above systems were evolved before Christ.

At this juncture we must take into account of the period of Sanskrit into consideration because the Upaniṣads are available in Sanskrit. The ‘historians’ traditionally and conveniently assign the date of Sanskrit as 1000 years or 5000 years before the era of Christ. But no concrete evidences were given by them. P.T. Srinivas Iyengar has indicated that the period of first Sanskrit inscription is 150 A.D. He writes:

“The first Sanskrit inscription published in India is that of Rudradāman of Mālva, of the middle of the II century A.D. From this period onwards, Prakrit inscriptions were rapidly replaced by Sanskrit ones”.⁵⁸

This has been endorsed by Nirad C. Choudhury.

Sanskrit was developed as a scholastic language to communicate their ideologies and to propagate them throughout the length and breadth of our country. Nirad C. Choudhuri had brought out the first epigraphic evidence of classical Sanskrit which was inscribed in 150 A.D. He states:

“Employment of classical Sanskrit in its fully developed form is first attested by an inscription during the year 72 of Saka era, this being equivalent to 150 A.D. It records the repair of a dam originally built by Chandra Gupta Maurya, and also contains a panegyric in verse which can be regarded as the first literary composition in classical Sanskrit.”⁵⁹

Mohanlal Sandal states that ‘the scriptural books of Hindu religion are written in classical Sanskrit. These books would not have been written prior to 4th c.A.D. Therefore, according to the scholars the period of the Upaniṣads could not be assigned before 4th c.A.D.’⁶⁰ The same is applied to the Vedas also. Vyāsa only had compiled the nomadic songs of the Vedic Aryans in Sanskrit. If the period of the Upaniṣads are fixed at fourth century of the Christ era, naturally the period of six systems will have to be fixed at a later date.

We have to analyse how the Mīmāṃsa Sūtras of Jaimini gained its name included in the Six Systems or Sad Darśanas. Many scholars believe that Vyāsa and Jaimini were contemporaries. Mīmāṃsa Sūtras were composed with the main aim of giving glory to the Brahmins and to subjugate the non-Aryans. This is the only system which records about the names of castes viz. Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaisyas, Sūdras, Anulōma, Pratilōma etc. that are not the subject matter of philosophical tenets. The Varnasrama dharma was the basic ideology of Manu Dharma Sastra which was developed

around 8th c.A.D. and it was accepted as the political code with the connivance of the ruling class. The same way Jaimini's sūtras should have been composed in the 7th or 8th c.A.D. and it is probable that the above work was included as a system of philosophy.

It was pointed out earlier that Vyāsa is not the name of an individual nor is it a proper name. The name of first Vyāsa, the son of Parasara, according to the Purāṇas, is Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana. It would be fitting to recognize Vyāsa as a school of thought. This Vyāsa school only had undertaken the work of composing, compiling, and propagating the ideologies of Vedānta. Therefore it may not be wrong to hold Vyāsa as the compiler of the systems of philosophy. But the inclusion of Pūrva Mīmāṃsa in the above system begs for an answer. A brief evaluation of Mīmāṃsa Sūtras in the following pages may throw a new light on the 'ideologies' of Mīmāṃsa.

5

Mīmāṃsa Sūtras

The Sanskrit word mīmāṃsa is etymologically described by Mohanlal Sandal in the following way. He defines,

“The word Mīmāṃsa is derived from ‘mām’ meaning ‘determination’, ‘measure’ by adding ‘sa’ as an affix in the ‘sad’ form of verb. It therefore means determination”.⁶¹

K. Lakshmanan explains that ‘the direct meaning of Mīmāṃsa is systematic enquiry or evaluation’.⁶² He further elucidates that ‘the fundamental objective of this system is not to evaluate whether the Vedic principles are correct or not but to evaluate whether the explanations what we give to the Vedas are correct or not. This is how this system got its name Mīmāṃsa’.⁶³

Who is the author of the Vedas? The immediate answer may be ‘God’. Abbe J.A. Dubois states:

“Brahma was their law giver, being the author of the Vedas, which he wrote with his own hand”.⁶⁴ Scholars like S. Radhakrishnan, states that ‘the Vedas are the outcome of the ancient ‘rishis’ and the seers’.⁶⁵

According to the theologians, the 'Old Testament books were given by God through the prophets. The New Testament books were written by different authors (direct and indirect disciples of Jesus Christ) with the help of the Holy Spirit. Likewise the Koran was imparted to Prophet Mohammed through the arch-angel Gabriel. To put it in a precise form, the scriptures were revealed to the divine people. But the Mīmāṃsakas contend that the Vedas were not written by anyone or the Vedas had no author and therefore the Vedas are called as 'Apauruseyam' meaning, not created but eternal.

Atheistic Sacrificial system

Sacrifice is associated with theistic worship or religion. Sacrifice is a sign of thanksgiving or an act of expiation of our sins. But sacrifice in Pūrva Mīmāṃsa has nothing to do with God or religion. According to K. Lakshmanan, 'Jaimini had not made any mention about God'.⁶⁶ But S. Radhakrishnan states that 'we should not conclude that Mīmāṃsaka is an atheist for the simple reason that there is no mention about God. It may be true that there is no reference about God but it does not deny God'.⁶⁷ Pūrva Mīmāṃsa deals, at length, with sacrifice and sacrificial rites but it has conveniently omitted God who is the centre of sacrifice. It should be noted here that sacrifice in general is always associated with God. But in the religious history Pūrva Mīmāṃsa seems to be the only system which gives no room for God. The atheistic religions such as Buddhism and Jainism are opposed to the offering of sacrifice. They do not believe in God and they do not profess sacrifice. But Pūrva Mīmāṃsa accepts sacrifice and negates God and therefore this may be called as an Atheistic Sacrificial system.

In the Old Testament period Levi tribe, which was one among the twelve tribes of Israel, had no share in the lands and properties

etc., unlike the other tribes, Levi tribe and its descendants were separated from others and God had assigned them to perform rituals and other religious duties in the temple. The other tribes are forbidden from performing the religious duties. The Levites belong to the priestly class. But the so called priestly class of India, who are Brahmins, had disowned God and they started claiming themselves to be the 'Pūsuras' (gods of earth). They had usurped the position of God and at the same time they had captured the the top position of the social stratification.

Pūrva Mīmāṃsa – not a philosophic system

According to S. Radhakrishnan, Pūrva Mīmāṃsa is the one which gives correct explanation for the Vedic rituals. These rituals are the rituals of the sacrifices and therefore they are called 'karma Mīmāṃsa'. In this regard, S.N. Dasgupta states:

“Discussions and doubts became more common about the many intricacies of the sacrificial rituals, and regular rational enquiries into them were begun in different circles by different scholars and priests. These represent the beginnings of Mīmāṃsa (lit.) attempts at rational enquiry and it is probable that there were different schools of thought”.⁶⁸

Since the Mīmāṃsa Sūtras deal mostly with the principles of the interpretation of the Vedic texts in connection with sacrifices very little of philosophy can be gleaned out of them. Many scholars hold that Mīmāṃsa is not a philosophy.

The teaching of Mīmāṃsa is considered as atheistic. V. Brodov states, ‘a certain Brahman named Jaimini expounded the greatest atheistic teaching’.⁶⁹ Again to quote S.N. Dasgupta, ‘Mīmāṃsa does not admit the existence of God as creator and destroyer of the

universe'.⁷⁰ He further states that God cannot be considered as a creator. He writes, 'moreover he (god) would himself require a creator to create him. So there is no God, no creator, no creation no dissolution or pralaya. The world has ever been running the same, without any new creation or dissolution, sr̥ṣṭi or pralaya'.⁷¹ Now it becomes crystal clear that Jaimini's teachings are not only atheistic but they are not philosophic.

The opening sūtra of Mīmāṃsa begins like this:

‘Atato dharma jijñāsa’⁷²

which means, ‘Now is the enquiry of duty’.⁷³ Mohanlal Sandal says, ‘It is very difficult to translate ‘dharma’ in another language. It is ‘duty’, ‘virtue’, ‘law’ and ‘righteousness’. It is succinctly explained in sūtra 2. The ‘Vārtikār’ has written 286 Verses on it’.⁷⁴

The internal evidences of Mīmāṃsa Sūtras clearly show that it was composed with an ulterior motive of subjugating the Dravidians. The Dictionary of Philosophy, published in Moscow states,

“Attention must be chiefly directed to the strict observance of public and religious duty which consists in the fulfillment of rituals and in obedience to all kinds of limitations and prohibitions imposed upon Indian by his caste. Mīmāṃsa holds that the observance of duty by the individual can lead him to final emancipation’.⁷⁵

Here the ‘public duty’ refers to the caste duty and ‘religious duty’ refers to the supremacy of the Brahmins, because the religious duties are performed by the Brahmin priests.

Vedic worship is sacrificial worship for they sacrificed animals and the flesh of the animals were consumed by the brahimns. Pūrva Mīmāṃsa states,

“the offerings of the flesh of all animals will be first made to the deity, then to the Sviṣṭakrit and consequently the remainder shall be distributed amongst the priests as food under ‘padāryanukrama’ principle, because this method will not break up the homogeneity of the act”.⁷⁶

Another peculiar characteristic of Mīmāṃsa sacrifice is to be noted. ‘The sacrifice alone sanctions divinity to the deities. It is only the sacrifice which qualifies the deities as deities and it grants unto them the power to safeguard the worldly affairs’.⁷⁷ The Mīmāṃsa assigns much importance to the one who performs ‘yajñā’. It is neither God nor the deities who are held as supreme but the one who performs the sacrifice and sacrifice itself are very prominent. According to Mīmāṃsa a Brahmin priest is ‘the one who knows all, he who knows the world’ are the Vedic utterances which refer not to God but to the sacrificial performer’.⁷⁸

Pūrva Mīmāṃsa was developed with an ulterior motive of subjugating the Dravidians by way of translating the laws of Varṇāśrama Dharma into practice, thereby it tries to uphold the supremacy of the Brahmins. A close survey of this system shall reveal that it was formulated as a part of conspiracy fabricated against the Dravidians who could be segregated and subjugated permanently.

The ceremonial rites were also formulated, modified and innovated so that Brahmanical supremacy could be upheld. Mohanlal Sandal elucidates a ceremony in the following way:

“There is a ceremony called ‘dashpeva’ in connection with ‘rājasuya’ sacrifice. It was a substitute for ‘Somayāg’. There were hundred Brahmanas and ten cups of Soma juice; each carried one-cup in procession to the seat and then the juice was drunk ceremoniously. Though ‘rājasuya’

was a sacrifice performed exclusively for a kshatriya king, yet the procession consisted of Brahmanas alone”.⁷⁹

Again it is instructed,

“One who is desirous of Brahmanic glory shall offer ‘charu’ made of white rice and boiled in ghee to Soma and Rudra ...”⁸⁰

The ‘Soma’ drink is exclusively reserved for the Brahmins only. The Kshatriyas and the Vaisyas cannot drink Soma and they can consume a drink which was prepared for them. According to Mīmāṃsa, ‘the ceremonies which are performed upon Soma should be performed upon Palavamsa, being a special preparation in a special case of a drink prepared for a kshatriya or a Vaisya. The Soma juice is exclusively drunk by brahman’.⁸¹

In Mīmāṃsa Sūtras, Ch. XII, Pada.4 explains that a Brahmana alone is entitled to act as a Rtvik for the following reasons:

- i) He alone is entitled to drink Soma juice;
- ii) Sannaya cannot be drunk by a non-Brahmana;
- iii) The Brahmana alone is entitled to the remnants of food in the full-moon and new-moon sacrifices and a non-Brahmana is prohibited to partake of them;
- iv) The anvaharya fee which consists of boiled rice is given to a Brahmana alone and the above reasons justify that Brahman alone is entitled to officiate as a Rtvik.⁸²

There are many number of Sūtras in Mīmāṃsa which are of the same nature and hostile attitude towards ‘Avarnas’ and these sūtras were knitted with careful craftsmanship with a view to philosophise

the Varnashrama Dharma in the Dravidian soil to subjugate the Dravidians and their lofty ideals of religion and philosophy.

The records of the past show that Mīmāṃsa was regarded as a law book to render justice to the Indians. Mīmāṃsa has aimed at the perpetual enslavement of the Dravidians. Therefore, scholars never include this in the six systems of philosophy.

S.N. Dasgupta writes:

“The Pūrva Mīmāṃsa (from the root man to think rational conclusions) cannot be spoken of as a system of philosophy. It is systematized code of principles in accordance with which Vedic texts are to be interpreted for the purpose of sacrifice”.⁸³

H.T. Colebrooks also has held the same view about Mīmāṃsa Sūtras. He writes: ‘It is not directly a system of philosophy; nor chiefly so’.⁸⁴ It is evidenced from the above analysis that Jaimini’s Mīmāṃsa Sūtras cannot be taken as a system of Indian philosophy. The composition of the Jaimini’s sūtras probably could have taken place after the 7th c. A.D. Many principles of Dharma was composed and was used as a political code, Adi Sankara’s commentaries were used as religious sanction of caste stratification and Jaimin’s sūtras were composed to be used as philosophical sanction of caste classification etc. In this background we have to examine how the commentaries and the original works of the five Vedāntic systems of philosophy had undergone mutilations, distortions and twisted commentaries. This will give us an idea as to how the non-Dravidian forces worked tirelessly through a network with an aim of subjugating the sons of the soil.

6

Interpolations in the Darśanas

The original works of the Darśanas are in Sūtra style. Tolkāppiyam, Naṇṇūl, Yāpparuṅkalam are some of the grammatical works in Tamil language composed in the sūtra metres. The purpose of the sūtra is to explain a topic in a precise or compressed form. A dew drop in the grass-leaf reflects the image of a big banyan tree. In the same way, each word in an aphorism will be so pregnant with indepth meaning. Naṇṇūl explains:

“Cilvakai yeḷuttīl palvakaip poruḷaic Cevvaṅ āṭiyil cerintinitu
viḷakkit

Titpa nuṭṭam cirantana cūttiram”⁸⁵

Many a time it would be difficult to understand the meaning of the aphorisms without the help of the commentaries.

This is very true with the Vedantic darśanas. Always there is a gap yarns between the period of the writers of the aphorism texts and the commentators. This ‘gap’ has to be borne in mind when we read the commentaries. The basic literature is anterior to the aphorism texts and the commentaries are later than the period of the aphorism texts. When the biased opinions of the commentators overtake the real meaning of the text, then the factual errors shall set in and it shall lead to illusory and distorted conclusions. But we witness, in India, that distortions, twisting-commentaries, mutilations

and destruction of the original texts were very rampant as far as the commentaries of the above subject are concerned.

In Tamil literature, Kamba Rāmāyaṇam had undergone interpolations in the original works. Annamalai University has published Kamba Rāmāyaṇam along with the ‘Pāṭa bedak kaḷaṅciyam’ – a collection of the interpolated texts. Jacobi in his ‘Das Ramayana’ holds that the seventh Kāṇṭam and certain portions in the first kāṇṭam are interpolations.⁸⁶ According to Mac Donell, Vyāsa’s Mahabharata originally consisted of only 8800 slokas.⁸⁷

He further writes:

“In chapter preceeding the 63rd Chapter which begins with ‘Rajoparicharonama’ praise of Mahabharata and some facts about its compositions are given by Vaisampayana or Sauti. This does not mean the work subsequent to Chapter 62 is in the words of Vyāsa himself. For it seems, probable that the whole has been overhauled that it is impossible now to point to any portion of the succeeding work as a composition of the original author himself”.⁸⁸

From this, it is apparently clear that the present edition of Mahabharata is not the original work by Vyāsa and over a period of time it had suffered a sea change of interpolations.

Moreover Indian history had witnessed several shameful atrocities of religious intolerance. C.V. Vaidya states, ‘between 700 and 1000 A.D. when Buddhism was overthrown and modern Hinduism established, that historical darkness came upon the land and most of the ancient annals were destroyed or tampered with’.⁸⁹

S.N. Dasgupta states, ‘The Samkhya is ascribed to a mythical Kapila, but the earliest works on the subject are probably now lost’.⁹⁰

What had happened to the earliest works of Samkhya? Was it a part of plot? According to the opinion of S.N. Dasgupta, 'the first commentary of the Brahma Sūtra was probably written by Baudhayana, which however is not available now'.⁹¹

According to Jacobi the metaphysics was added to the original work of Nyāya at a later period. This view has been endorsed by S.N. Gupta. He says:

"I do not dispute Prof. Jacobi's main point that the metaphysical portion of the work was a later addition, for this seems to me to be very probable view. In fact Vātsyāyana himself designates the logical portion as pūthakprasthāna (separate branch)".⁹²

The interpolations done to Nyāya has further been brought to light. Again to quote S.N. Gupta,

"The fact that there are unmistakable proofs of the interpolation of many of the sūtras makes the fixing of the date of the original part of the Nyāya Sūtras still more difficult..."⁹³

"Nyāya Sūtras, one as Nyāyasūci and the other as Nyāyasūtroddhāra, it seems that even in the Vacaspati's time he was not certain as to the authenticity of many of the Nyāya sūtras. He further points out that there are unmistakable signs that many of the sūtras were interpolated, and relates the Buddhist tradition from China and Japan that Mirok mingled Nyāya and Yōga. He also thinks that the sūtras underwent two additions one at the hands of the Buddhists and another at the hands of some Hindu who put in Hindu arguments against the Buddhist ones".⁹⁴

It is pointed out that Yōga tenets were incorporated in Nyāya with an aim to wreck Nyāya system. The recommendation of Yōga Samadhi with the fundamentals of the Nyāya philosophy is flatly inconsistent with Nyāya system. Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya opines that,

“the only explanation for their presence in the Nyāya-sūtra is that these are later inserted into the text, thought wreckless to any thought of the inner consistency of the philosophy”.⁹⁵

Moreover the Yōga Samadhi violently goes against the Nyāya philosophy. Likewise the concept of liberation is said be grafted into Nyāya system at a later period and it is pointed out that ‘it is interfering most seriously with the internal consistency of the philosophy.’⁹⁶

In the previous paragraphs we have pointed out how the alien doctrines were interpolated in the Nyāya system. We have cited only a handful of examples. In fact the grafting on every system was done at a larger scale. Debiprasad points out:

“But all the later additions and alterations to the text are not of the same nature. As a matter of fact, the liberty taken in freely adding new sūtras to it has sometimes the most disastrous consequences for the Nyāya philosophy. By allowing the alien thoughts to be grafted on the philosophy, the later interpolations often make it look like a bundle of inconsistencies”.⁹⁷

Now the scholars think that the present text of Nyāya Sūtras may not be the work of one man, of one age, of the professors of one science or even the professors of one system of religion. It should be understood that it is not the case only with Nyāya-Sūtras

but the other systems also had underwent radical changes at the hands of different personalities. Now we shall proceed to study the Vedānta briefly and try to evaluate how Vedānta is considered as the culmination of the Indian thought.

Among the philosophical treatises Brahma Sūtras of Vyasa is considered as the supreme philosophical work of the Indian thought for the Brahma Sūtras is the quintessence of the Upanishads. The Upanishads are regarded as Vedānta and the Brahma Sūtras is otherwise known as the Vedānta Sūtras.

It is traditionally held that Vedānta is the end portion of the Veda. But the researches undertaken by the contemporary scholars reveal that the Upanishads are inherently opposing the Vedic rites and rituals; Vedānta is nothing but the termination of the Vedic studies. The Vedānta system propounds new doctrines which are diametrically opposite to the Vedic ideologies. Therefore, Vedānta has to be rightly interpreted as the one which puts an end to the Veda.

Vedas do not propound monotheism; they do not advocate avatar doctrine; when there is no monotheistic doctrine it gives no room for the trinitarian dogma. Vedas are alien to the temple worship. Temple-worship is the outcome of the Agama school. According to P. T. Srinivas Iyengar, 'The Agama is technically name of the Tantra.

7

Vedānta the culmination of Indian thought

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the books dealing with the worship of Siva, Vishnu and, Sakti in this sense, the Agama cult is opposed to the Vedas'.⁹⁸ Vedic rites are sacrificial, i.e., killing the animals as sacrifice whereas the rites of Vedānta are non-sacrificial and the rites are free from fire.

The fact being very prominent that the Vedānta not only puts an end to the Vedicism but it initiates a new thematic doctrine of 'jñāna kāṇḍa' pertaining to the investigation of Brahman knowledge (Brahma Vidya) which alone shall set the mankind free and lead it towards salvation which in turn shall have its fullness in attaining heavenly bliss.

Brahma Sūtras and Christianity

Brahma Sūtras of Bādarāyaṇa are a compilation of aphorisms (Sūtras) dealing with the subject of Dravidian philosophy which is, nowadays, called as Indian Philosophy. Though the Upaniṣads are known by the name Vedānta, most of the learned scholars prefer to call Brahma Sūtras as Vedānta for the commentators on Brahma Sūtras agree that it is the summary of the teachings of the Upaniṣads.

The Brahma Sūtras assert that God (Brahman) is cognizable only through the scriptures. He cannot be known by other means except through the scriptures and therefore Brahman is the main purport of all Vedānta texts. Unlike the other texts, Brahma Sūtras delves directly into the investigation of Brahman, (as the first aphorism indicates) it not only negates 'Karma kāṇḍa' but institutes a new theme in the construction of Indian theology and in this process Vyāsa has pre-eminently employed the epithets in Sanskrit for God and they are as same as the epithets used to denote Jesus Christ in the New Testament. The basic doctrines such as the Cosmology of the universe, Īsvara being the creative principle, Trinitarian doctrine, the tenets of incarnation, the bondage of sin, the fulfillment of sacrifice, salvation through complete surrender, the aspects of eternal fire and eternal life are some of the basic doctrines that are

being dealt with in the Brahma Sūtras. Therefore this study would facilitate in bringing out the analogous features of Vedānta and Christianity.

Paul Deussen has brought out the analogy between Veda and the Old Testament and between Vedānta and the New Testament. He states:

“For the Vedas falls (as Cankara on Brih. P.4 ff. shows), according to the concept of Vedānta, into two parts, which show a far reaching analogy with Old and New Testaments, a part of works (Karma kāṇḍa) which includes the Mantras and Brahmanas in general and a part of knowledge (jñāna kāṇḍa) which includes the Upaniṣads and what belongs to them”.⁹⁹

In addition to this Paul Deussen brings out the basic principles of Brahma Sūtras on par with Christian dogmatics. He writes:

“The work of Bādarāyaṇa stands to the Upaniṣads in the same relation as Christian Dogmatics to the New Testament; it investigates the teaching about God, the world, the soul, its conditions of wandering and of deliverance, removes apparent conditions, binds them systematically together, and is especially concerned to defend them against the attacks of the opponents”.¹⁰⁰

One of the basic doctrines of Brahma Sūtras is the doctrine of trinity. The epithets employed by Bādarāyaṇa to refer to Brahman (God) exemplify the Trinitarian aspects. Nirmātāram¹⁰¹ (creator), Sva¹⁰² (beginningless – without origin), Param¹⁰³ (Transcendent), Pati¹⁰⁴ (Lord), Mahat¹⁰⁵ (Great), Prakrit¹⁰⁶ (material cause of the universe), Sarvabēta¹⁰⁷ (all powerful), Arūpavat¹⁰⁸ (Formless), Sat¹⁰⁹ (Existent), Sarvagatam¹¹⁰ (All pervading), Atta¹¹¹ (the universe

dissolves in Him) — the para state of God is expounded in the above epithets.

The ‘apara’ state of God (Brahman) is expounded in the following aphorisms. Brahma Sūtras indicates that God is endowed with ‘form’. Brahma Sūtras explains it as ‘rūpa upangasāt’.¹¹² The name of Brahman is Satya.¹¹³ The nomenclature with which Jesus was identified is ‘Truth’.¹¹⁴ Vedānta emphasises that Om — the mystic syllable is ‘Udgita’ which is new, has to be meditated upon and Udgita denotes ‘praṇava’¹¹⁵ Om is not a mystic syllable but it is a word meaning Ām (Tamil) which is the equivalent of ‘let it be done.’ The name of Jesus in New Testament is Word¹¹⁶ (Logos) and this word is associated with the creation of the universe.¹¹⁷ Om is identified with Nada Brahman and Īsvara.

The ‘parapara’ state of God has its vivid explanations in very many aphorisms of the Brahma Sūtras. This is otherwise explained as the ‘Antaryami’. (Indewelling or immanent form). Brahma Sūtras elucidates this in the following way:

‘Antaryami Yahitai vātisu’¹¹⁸

‘Antara Upapathe’.¹¹⁹

God is Vaisvānara. According to Brahma Sūtras,

‘Vaisvānara sādharmaṇa sabda Viśeṣaḥ’¹²⁰

Vaisvānara should not be taken in the ordinary sense as fire but according to Satapata Brāhmaṇa, ‘He who knows this Vaisvānara abiding within man, this Agni Vaisvānara is a person’.¹²¹ Therefore, Vaisvānara is conceived as a person who abides in the heart.

The above analysis shows that the Christian doctrine of trinity is echoed in Brahma Sūtras. The Vedānta tenets analysed above pertaining to the doctrine of the Triune God is Tabulated as under.¹¹²

Param	Aparam	Paraparam
Janmāti	Rūpam	Antaryāmi
Janmātāram	Aparam	Takarākāsa
Pati	Jyōtī	Vaisvānara
Yōni	Isvara	Ānanta Māya
Sat	Om	
Arupi	Satya	
Param	Prana	
Ākasalingam		

Table. 4.

Vedānta belongs to the school of fulfillment of sacrifice. It was pointed out elsewhere that Vedānta inherently is opposed to the offering of sacrifice. In history, Christianity alone gives the reason why sacrifice had been dispensed with – because Jesus had offered himself as the supreme sacrifice as an expiation for the sins of the mankind. Brahma Sūtras was composed on this line and therefore it states:

“Ata evacāgnindhanā dyanapekṣa”¹²³

(For this very reason, there is no necessity of kindling the sacrificial fire).

The Vedic practice of offering sacrifice is always linked with fire. Now the sacrifice is stopped and hence there is no need to

kindle the fire. Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad brings out how the brāhmanas wish to know God with the help of offering sacrifice.

“Brāhmaṇās desire to know him by the study of the Veda, by sacrifice, by gifts”¹²⁴

But Vedānta prescribes ‘bhakti’ and ‘upāsana’ as a means of salvation. So ‘bhakti’ has taken the place of sacrifice. The real sacrifice is God and not the animals. This new doctrine has permeated in every text of Vedānta and therefore we come across the statement ‘I am the Sacrifice’ in the ‘Prasthanā Thraya’ texts. Būhadāraṇyaka says:

“Aham Brahma Aham Yajñā, Aham lōka iti”¹²⁵

(I am Brahman, I am sacrifice I am the world).

Gita says: ‘Ahameva Yajñā’.¹²⁶ ‘Adhidaivata is the Puruṣa; I am the Adhiyajñā’.¹²⁷ There are plenty of passages in this line.

In line with the Bible, Brahma Sūtras attests the soul is naturally in bondage. It employs two terminologies to indicate two types of sins; one is ‘tirōhitam’ and the other is ‘bandam’.¹²⁸ When a person realizes God the two sins shall be destroyed. Sankara writes: ‘When that Brahman is realized (the result) the non-clinging and destruction of the previous sins respectively, because it is (no) declared (by the scriptures)’.¹²⁹ The term ‘itare’ here refers to the Old sin and the other sin, i.e., according to Christianity it is the original sin and the individual sin.

The commentators of ‘Prasthanā Thraya’, and to cite Ramanuja, he reiterates that ‘bondage is real and is the result of ignorance which is the nature of karma without a beginning. This bondage can be destroyed only through knowledge, i.e., through the knowledge that Brahman is the inner Ruler different from souls and matter’.¹³⁰ The Vedāntins admit that the results of work (karma) are ephemeral

and can never yield permanent results, and so it cannot help us to attain immortality. The scriptural texts of Vedānta declare that immortality can be attained only through the knowledge of Brahman. Svetasvatara declares: 'knowing Him alone one transcends death'.¹³¹

The last three sections in the last chapter of Brahma Sūtras deal, at length, with the nature of liberation. Brahma Sūtras admit that the, 'soul is not destroyed by the destruction of the gross body'.¹³² St. Paul writes in I Corinthians, 15th Chapter about the nature of the resurrected body. Vedānta Sūtras endorses the above Pauline writings. Uttara Mīmāṃsa (Brahma Sūtras) emphasizes that the soul, after resurrection is subject to the eternal life or eternal fire. According to Brahma Sūtras, it is explained as 'amūtatvam ca anuposya'.¹³³ The Tamil word for eternal life, 'amiḷtam' is corrupted as amūtam; 'anuposya' means 'without having burnt'. 'It would be appropriate to hold that this aphorism text would refer to the attainment of eternal life (heaven) without having burnt in the eternal fire (hell)'.¹³⁴

According to Brahma Sūtras, 'the released soul attains all lordly powers except the power of creation'.¹³⁵ Therefore the powers of the liberated souls are not absolute but limited, and are dependent on the will of Īsvara'.¹³⁶ This explanation of Sankara may be taken as the refutation of his own concept of 'Aham Brahmāsmi'. According to Sankara's concept of Advaita, the individual soul becomes Brahman himself. This is an example how Sankara contradicts his own concept by way of twisting commentaries. Ramanuja also reiterates that 'the cosmic activity does not belong to the released selves'.¹³⁷

Moksha is Brahma-lōka. Ramanuja defines, that 'the compound word, Brahma-loka must be interpreted as the Brahman itself is the

loka (i.e., the world)'.¹³⁸ It is in tune with the apocalyptic writing of the New Testament. The book of Revelation describes heaven in the following ay:

“And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb.”

And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God is light, and its lamp is the Lamb”.¹³⁹

The other aphorism texts of Brahṃa Sūtras, if interpreted in the light of the Bible, shall have clarity and the true meaning of Vedānta could be understood. In short, Brahma Sūtras is the Compendium of Christology and the theological tenets of Christianity. But Brahma Sūtras is corrupted with interpolations and mutilations and distorted commentaries. We shall discuss a few aspects in the following paragraphs.

Corruptions done to Vedānta

It was already pointed out how the Darśana texts underwent mutilations and distortions. Here we shall see a few examples how the original Vedānta texts were tampered with and how they were corrupted by means of commentaries. The Upanishads, Brahma Sūtras and Bhagavad Gīta together constitute Vedānta. Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhva, Nimbarkar, Valabha, Bhaskara are a few of the notable and celebrated commentators for the ‘Prasthanā Thraya’ texts. It is because of their line of thought the original Vedānta texts were expounded from various points of perceptions, different schools of Vedānta came into being. But it is unfortunate that a good member of scholars continue to indicate that Vedānta is Sankara’s explanation¹⁴⁰ and vice versa.

Among the available commentaries, Sankara's writings seem to be anterior to the others. Ramanuja refers to one Dravicharya as 'Bhasyakara' in his book 'Vedārtha Sangraha'.¹⁴¹ According to S. Radhakrishnan, Gaudapada who was the author of Māṇḍūkya kārika refers to an advaitic tradition.¹⁴² Gaudapada was the teacher of Govinda who was the teacher of Sankara. It is held that Gaudapada's Māṇḍūkya Kārika had given rise to the Advaitic philosophy of Sankara. The commentaries of Sankara on vital points were refuted by Ramanuja and Madhva and they suffered vehement criticisms at their hands within the scope of this paper, only a few aspects of Vedānta that underwent misinterpretation and mutilations may be discussed here.

According to Sankara, the world appearance is māya (illusion). Maya or illusion is no real entity, it is only false knowledge (avidya) that makes the appearance, which vanishes when the reality is grasped and found. Maya or avidya has an apparent existence only so long as it lasts, but the moment the truth is known it is dissolved.

The theory of māya of Sankara is refuted by Madhva school. According to this school,

"To a theistic approach with an unswerving belief in the existence of a personal God in His grace, the Sankarite doctrine of the falsity of world appeared as paradoxical conclusion. If God is real the world that flows from him should also be real. If on the other hand, it is false then all philosophy about it must be equally false meaning eventually that all our enquiry about truth is only a mad activity. God is real, soul is real, the creation is real, the bondage is real: this alone can be a basis of sound philosophy."¹⁴³

The concept of māya also has been refuted on the basis of logic. K. Narain points out that

“This doctrine of ‘falsity’ (mithyātva) disapproved by the Madhvites on the ground that the very conception of an order of the existence as both different from ‘being’ and ‘non-being’ is the transgression of the Law of Excluded Middle and is, therefore illogical”.¹⁴⁴

Vedānta is inherently a theistic philosophy but the commentaries of Sankara deviate from this line and his absolutism, monism and the concept of māya and avidya do not agree with the thematic aspects of Vedānta. S.N. Gupta observes, ‘It seems that Bādarāyaṇa, the writer of Brahma-Sūtras, was probably more a theist than an absolutist like his commentator Sankara’.¹⁴⁵

9

Aham Brahmasmi

Aham Brahmasmi is one of the Mahavākhyas of Vedānta. It occurs in Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad.¹⁴⁶ The interpretation of Sankara for the above Mahavākhyā had set controversy into motion which identifies individual soul as equivalent to Brahman. While writing commentary for Brahma Sūtra 1.1.4, Sankara writes,

“The identity of the individual soul and Brahman set forth in texts like, “I am Brahman” (Br. 1.4.10), is not a fancy or imagination, but an actuality, and therefore differs from meditation and devout worship as prescribed by in the texts like, “one should meditate on mind as Brahman” and the “Sun is Brahman” (Ch. 3.18.1)”.¹⁴⁷

K. Varain states that ‘for Sankara the only means of breaking the fetters of bondage is the realization that the individual self is Brahman and that his appearance as jīvātman in association with the subtle and gross bodies due to the false super imposition of avidya’.¹⁴⁸

The Advaita philosophy holds that Brahman and individual self are not different. Sankara elsewhere writes:

“The opponent holds that Brahman is to be comprehended as different from the individual soul on account of their essential difference. For one is subject to misery, while the other is not. This sūtra (Brahma Sūtras, 4.1.3) refutes the view and holds that Brahman is to be comprehended as identical with one’s self for in reality the two are identical, the experience of misery etc. by the individual soul – in other words, the Jīvahood-being due to the limiting adjunct, the internal organ”.¹⁴⁹

The individual soul cannot be identical with Brahman because the Vedānta Sūtras prescribe that one should meditate upon Brahman as Aham Brahmasmi. The process of meditation makes it very clear that both are not identical because if both are comprehended as one, how could there be an act of devotion, meditation or bhakti? In this regard K. Marain states:

“Sankara’s philosophy of the individual soul and his doctrine of Bhakti as only means to the purification of heart are unworthy of any serious consideration. The individual soul is a seat of ignorance whereas Brahman is Omniscient, the former is subject to transmigration, and experiences both pleasure and pain, whereas the latter is free from all this. How can then the two be identical? Moreover the identity of jīva and Brahman would strike at the very root of the concept of bhakti (devotion) which to the Vaiṣṇavites is the only means of emancipation. Unless God is different from soul the former cannot be the object of latter’s devotion”.¹⁵⁰

Sankara’s monism is refuted on the basis of scriptures. ‘Though souls are similar to the Lord, yet they are not identical with Him. They are mere reflections of the Lord, just as we have reflections of

the one sun in different sheets of water. They are therefore separate from Him, dependent on Him and of His likeness (18)'.¹⁵¹

The individual soul ultimately is from the Lord. The soul is a part of Brahman, not in the physical sense as threads are parts of the cloth, but as sparks are part of fire, or the Ākāśa (space) in a vessel is part of all pervading Ākāśa....¹⁵²

The souls are limited in power, though they resemble the Lord in an extremely small degree. According to Vallabha, the soul cannot change its nature and become one with Brahman. He further explains that in texts like, 'That thou art', the soul is said to be Brahman, because the soul has the qualities of Brahman for its essence'.¹⁵³ It has already been pointed out that Sankara has contradicted his own theory of 'Aham Brahmasmi' because the released souls do not obtain the power of creation. The sea water in a bottle is part of the sea but the bottled water is not the sea. Likewise though man is the 'amsa' of Brahman, the individual soul cannot be identical with Brahman.

The Bible says that man was created in the image of God¹⁵⁴ (the amsa of Brahman according to Ramanuja), yet his divine nature was prevailed over by his disobedience and consequently the 'wages of sin begot death' and through this, man from generation after generation lost his glory. It had necessitated the incarnation of God and as an act of expiation for the sin committed by the first man, God had to offer himself as the sacrifice. This is salvation. In the act of salvation God is the saviour and the individual soul is the one who has to be saved. Both are not identical and they can never become identical.

The interpretation for 'Aham Brahmasmi', and 'Thou art that' (Tat Tvam asi) given by Raimundo Panikkar may be quoted here for it explains from a new angle.

“If God exists, this fact involves some specific anthropological connotations: God cannot be just an ‘it’ but must appear to me as a Person. An ‘it’ is not conscious and is not perfect; moreover God cannot be a He or a She – God must be an ‘I’. Furthermore, God must be not an I, but the I. God is the One-who-is, the I-who is, the I-am-who-am, the *aham*. We are God’s *thou* God is the I, and we are the *thou*, if God exists. God has absolute priority. We may have to speak of God as ‘he’, but if there is a God, God speaks first, speaks *us* out-so we come into existence. God is the I who speaks and each of us is a spoken ‘thou’ of God, not, we are to the extent that God-the I-utters our being as his ‘thou’. We are God’s – and this is the reason for our dignity and our limitation, both in one. We are the ‘thou’ of God – and only to this extent do we have any *being*. Every one of us is the ‘thou art’ uttered by the ‘I am’”.¹⁵⁵

As far as the concept of Īsvara in Vedānta it plays a central role. K.C. Battacharya states: ‘Īsvara is not in reality different from Brahman’. But Sankara’s observation about Īsvara put us in a very delicate position which compels us to review the credibility of Sankara. F.L. Kumar states:

“Concerning the existence of Īsvara Sankara says that “the question of God’s existence is an absurd one”. If God exists, then he must exist as other objects do. Having taken account of the proofs for God’s existence given by theologians and various other Indian systems, Sankara concludes that all these proofs have relevance only within the world of empirical experience. Sankara further affirms that no rational argument for the existence of God can be

finally upheld. Sankara's final conclusion is that if the notion of Īsvara has to have any meaning, it must be equated with Brahman. Brahman is independent of divisions, and holds in perspective absolute objectivity and subjectivity. In other words Brahman is absolute awareness".¹⁵⁶

Sankara is accused of as a hidden Buddhist (Prachanna Boudha) by Vijñāna Bhikṣu and others. S.N. Gupta's statement reveals that the writings of Sankara is not his original but he had borrowed from Vijñānavāda and Sūnyavāda of Buddhism. He writes:

"I am led to think that Sankara's philosophy is largely a compound of Vijñānavāda and Sūnyavāda of Buddhism with the Upaniṣad notion of the permanence of self super added".¹⁵⁷

He further states, "Sankara and his followers borrowed much of their dialectic form of criticism from the Buddhists. His Brahman was very much like the Sūnya of Nāgārjuna".¹⁵²

Finally, the observation of Arthur Berriedale Keith about Sankara's commentaries may be quoted here to show how his writings were unreliable to the system of Vedānta. He writes:

".... Nevertheless, the attempt is undoubtedly merely a clever *tour de force* without final validity and its ingenuity is as great but no greater than its improbability. That this is the case could be easily proved by the examination of the Upaniṣads in detail, but it is sufficient to state that Brahma Sūtra itself did not take the view adopted by Caṅkara...."¹⁵⁹

Philosophic sanction for caste system

Varṇāśrama Dharma was the brain-child of the Aryans. This was conceived by them and the Brahmins took the lead to translate this social stratification with the help of religious literature and philosophic tenets with an aim of subjugating the Dravidians and keeping them under perpetual slavery. In this line Mīmāṃsa was taken as the law book by the British rulers to render justice to the hindus. We can cite the observation of Colebrooke with regard to the Mīmāṃsa Sūtras:

“As to Mimamsa philosophy of Jaimini Mr. Colebrooke said, ‘The disquisitions of the Mimamsa bear, therefore a certain resemblance to judicial questions, and infact the Hindu law being blended with the religion of the people the same modes of reasoning are applicable, and are applied to the one as to the other. The logic of the Mimamsa is the logic of the law; the rule of interpretation of civil and religious ordnances. Each case is examined and determined upon general principles; and form the philosophy of law, and this is, in truth, what has been attempted in Mimamsa’”.¹⁶⁰

It was already pointed out on what grounds Mīmāṃsa Sūtras were composed. But the Brahmin commentators for Vedānta Sūtras had tampered the original writings of Vyāsa with their scholastic acumen to interpolate caste system. The philosophical tenets of the Dravidian exponents of the five systems (Pūrva Mīmāṃsa excluded) are earmarked with an ideology of spiritual liberation to be attained by all without any kind of reservation in the name of caste, creed, language etc. But it is shocking to note that a notorious aspect of ‘Apasūdrādhikaraṇa’ – forbidding Sūdras from achieving Brahma jñāna is recorded in the original texts of Brahma Sūtras. The text begins in the following manner:

“Sugasya tandanādaraṣravaṇāt tadādravaṇāt
sūcyate hi”¹⁶¹

For this Sankara writes that,

“Purifactory ceremonies like Upanayana etc. are declared by the scriptures to be a necessary condition of the study of all kinds of knowledge or Vidya; but these are meant only for the higher castes. Their absence in the case of the sūdras is repeatedly declared in the scriptures. “Sūdras do not incur sin (by eating prohibited food), nor have they any purifactory rights” etc. (Manu 10.12.6). Consequently they are not entitled to the study of the Vedas.”¹⁶²

Ramanuja and Madhva also fall in line with Sankara in writing commentary for the above portion. But the original texts of Brahma Sūtras declare in the previous aphorism (prior to Apasūdrādhikaraṇa) 1.3.25 that ‘man is entitled to the study of scriptures’ – ‘manusya adikāratvāt’. This text does not impose any kind of

restriction to the human beings. Therefore it is evident that the portions in 'Apāsūdrādhikaraṇa' – 1.3.33-38 are interpolations.

Moreover Vedānta is a system of philosophy which oppose caste stratification and it professes humane love. Vivekananda writes:

“Caste system is opposed to the religion of Vedānta. We must give up the idea that one man is born superior to another has no meaning in Vedānta”.¹⁶³

Therefore it is clear that Varṇāśrama was interpolated in the original Vedānta Sūtras and we can infer from the commentaries that the commentators might have been the instruments to introduce caste stratification because the commentators were all Brahmins and it is very unfortunate to note that none of them had raised their voice against Chatur Varna.

Extensive and indepth studies have to be undertaken in future so that the sabotage done to the original texts of the Darśanas could be brought to the lime light.

Riddles of Indian Philosophy

The various systems of Indian philosophy has a common riddle which was not solved. Every system admits that the soul is fettered with bondage; the bondage clings on to the soul from one's birth. The reason for the bondage of soul and the circumstances that led to the bondage are not mentioned in the Indian philosophy. 'Bandham', 'bandhanam', 'pūrva' and 'uttara bandham', 'sahaja malam', 'paḷavinai' etc. are some of the names with which bondage is mentioned. K. Lakshmanan laments that neither the theistic religions of India nor the philosophic systems reveal how the soul was entangled with bondage.¹⁶⁴

Saiva Siddhanta unfolds this riddle

Saiva Siddhanta expounds that the bondage was eternal. Sivañānabhodam of Meikaṇṭār mentions in its first aphorism and Tirukkaḷiṟruppaṭiār goes a step further and sings in the following way:

Mutti mutar̥koṭikke mōkak koṭpaṭarntu
Atti paḷuttatu aruḷ eṇṇum-kattiyaṇāl
Mōkak koṭḷ arukka muttip paḷam paḷukkum
Yēkak koṭḷ Eḷumkāṇ iṇru.¹⁶⁵

(The first heavenly creeper was entangled by the evil creeper and yielded the fruit of death. But the Supreme Creeper (God-Yēkak Koṭi) shall cut off the evil creeper with the help his sword of grace which shall pave the way for the heavenly creeper to yield the fruit of Mukti).

Though Saiva Siddanta gives an explanation the allegorical meaning of the above poem cannot be understood unless we make a comparative study of Bible and Koran.

The Bible, Koran and Saiva Siddanta

The metaphorical expression of Saiva Siddanta is the reflection of the Biblical event which narrates about the fall of the first man Adam. Adam is the heavenly creeper which was created to yield the heavenly fruit. His disobedience made him to yield the fruit of death – this is how the heavenly creeper was entangled by the evil creeper. God will send his Son who shall cut off the evil creeper and the heavenly creeper shall yield the fruit of mukti. The Christian theologians call it by the name Original sin or Adam's sin. It is because of the disobedience of Adam, sin entered into this world and his generations were not spared. The unanswered question in the Indian philosophy now has the suitable answer.

‘Ahañkāra’ is the root of evil. The personified form of evil is Satan or Devil. The creation of man and angels are explained in Koran. God created the angels before creating man. Having created the angels,

‘Lord said unto the angels: lo! I am about to create a mortal out of mire’.

And when I have fashioned him and breathed into him My Spirit, then fall down before him prostrate,

‘The angels fell down prostrate, every one.’¹⁶⁶

But Iblis revolted against the creator and asked Him,

“Why should I prostrate myself unto a mortal whom thou hast created out of potter’s clay of black mud altered?”¹⁶⁷

“He said: I am better than him. Thou createdst me of fire, whilst him thou didst create of clay.

He said: Go forth from hence, for lo! Thou art outcast,

And lo! My curse is on thee till the Day of Judgement.”¹⁶⁸

The self pride of the fallen angel is termed as ‘āṇavam’. All the Indian systems of philosophy including Jainism and Buddhism accept the ‘original sin’ but the Indian scriptures do not elaborate on this subject.

The comparative study has brought out the background with which the ‘heavenly creeper’ was entangled by the ‘evil creeper’ enabling it to yield the fruit of death. The Bible explains how the first man Adam, the holy creation of God, who was created in the image of God, was beguiled by Satan and from that moment onwards God’s anger fell upon Adam and Eve and their descendants, as a consequence, the whole creation was estranged from the presence of God and thus sin had acquired its dominion over mankind and the result was death.

According to the Bible the restoration of the ‘Lost Eden’ or the Salvation of mankind was promised through Jesus, the Son of God. Jesus was crucified and he conquered death through his resurrection and thus the fall of the first man was set right and the lost glory was restored. The philosophical tenets of the Darśanas, especially, Uttara Mīmāṃsa, reflect the above doctrines as bondage, release, mukti etc.

Conclusion

The five systems (barring Pūrva Mīmāṃsa) are the systemetised forms of Indian philosophy. The exponents of the above systems developed their tenets out of the Upaniṣads. The Upaniṣads are otherwise known as Vedānta. Vedānta is not the end portion of the Aryan Vedas but it is the termination of Vedicism. Vedānta is the culmination of the Dravidian (Indian) thought. It would be befitting, therefore, to call Indian philosophy as Dravidian philosophy.

Charvaka, Buddhism, Jainism, Sāṃkhya, Yōga, Vaisesika, Nyāya, Uttara Mīmāṃsa, Saivite philosophy, Vaiṣṇavite philosophy were founded and nurtured by the Dravidian seers and saints in the Dravidian soil but were captured by the Aryans. They rendered distorted and twisted commentaries and sabotaged the original texts so that the Dravidians may be subjugated and kept under perpetual slavery. They made use of the Dravidian philosophical tenets such as cycle of birth and rebirth to achieve their ends and they incorporated the Varṇāśrama dharma in the Indian Darśanas with an ulterior motive.

The Brahma Sūtras of Vyāsa is unique and the Upaniṣadic ideologies are condensed and rendered in the form of aphorism texts – it is an investigation into the nature of Brahman. A separate study on Brahma Sūtras reveal that its doctrines are Christian and it has emerged as a compendium of Christology and indegenised Christianity. This study also unravels the mystery of the concept of ‘bondage’ and its first inception and thus the riddles of Indian philosophy is solved.

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